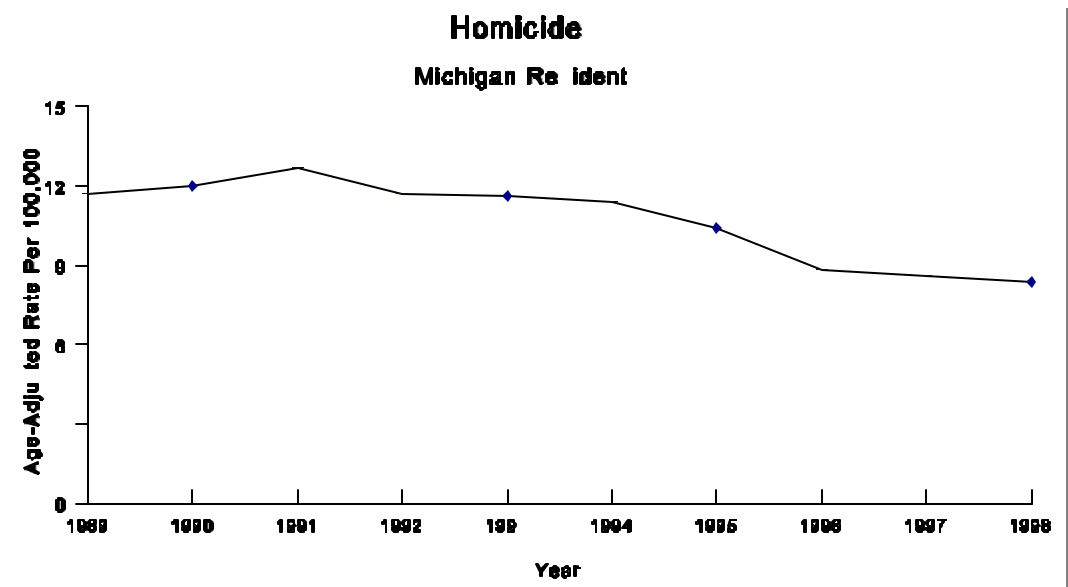


Vital Statistics Indicators

Homicides



Source: Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics, MDCH

How are we doing?

Homicide is the fourth leading cause of Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL) for people below the age of 75.

Homicide is the negligent or intentional killing of one person by another. Homicide may be the result of arguments between friends or acquaintances, domestic violence, child abuse, or crimes perpetrated by strangers.

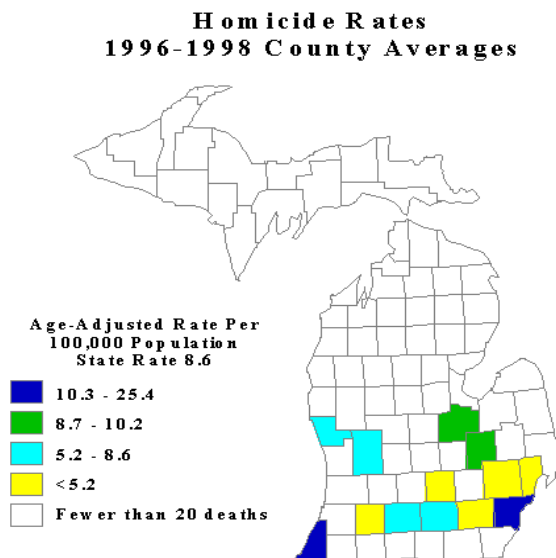
In 1998, there were 769 deaths due to homicide in Michigan. The age-adjusted rate for homicide was 8.4 per 100,000 population. Homicide rates have been steadily declining since the peak in 1991. During the last ten years, homicide was one of the top 10 leading causes of death until 1996.

How does Michigan compare with the U.S.?

Michigan's 1997 age-adjusted homicide rate of 8.6 was similar to the U.S. rate of 8.0. Homicide was the fifth leading cause of YPLL in the U.S. in 1997. National homicide rates have also been declining and are the lowest they have been in three decades.

How are different populations affected?

Adolescents experienced an overall increase in mortality in the second half of this century. This is due mainly to an increase in homicide, suicide, and accidents for that age group. In Michigan, homicide was the second leading cause of death for 15-34 year-olds and the third leading cause of death for children 5-14 years-old. Since the 1980s, adolescents, along with other groups, have shown a steady decline in homicide rates.



The homicide rate for African-Americans is 13 times higher than it is for whites. In 1998, the age-adjusted rate for African-Americans was 38.9 compared to 2.9 for whites. The age-adjusted death rate is highest for African-American men at 66.7. Homicide is the leading cause of death for African-American men and women aged 15-34.

Men are more likely than women to be both victims and perpetrators of homicide. The age-adjusted homicide rate for men (12.9) was more than three times the rate for women (3.9).

What other information is important to know?

Poverty, lifestyle behaviors (such as weapon possession), a history of previous abuse or violence by parents, racial discrimination, and belief in violence or physical punishment as a socializing agent are factors associated with an increased risk for being a victim or perpetrator of homicide. Alcohol and drug use have also been shown to be associated with, but not the cause of, homicide.

What is the Department of Community Health doing to affect this indicator?

The department supports community, youth, and domestic violence prevention and reduction efforts to change the circumstances that can lead to homicides. The department is revising the Safe Michigan Plan, which addresses primary prevention for safe streets, schools, homes, and work sites. The department has developed model programs to assist communities in assessing and improving their youth violence prevention status. Additionally, the department has implemented a violence prevention media campaign.

The department has developed and implemented model systems for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of violence-related data and information. A tool to assist organizations in looking at violence in their communities as well as other issues that can impact levels of violence has been developed and disseminated.

The department responds directly to persons who are of potential danger to others as a result of mental illness by providing psychiatric inpatient care at four adult and one child and adolescent psychiatric hospital. Community Mental Health Service Programs, through contracts with the department, offer a comprehensive array of specialty services such as psychiatric inpatient care, hospital based crisis observation care, intensive crisis residential and stabilization services, and community treatment.

Last updated: February 2000.